

**Charter School Facilities Program
Proposition 51 Funding Round
Staff Summary Report – December 2017**

Applicant/Obligor:	Visalia Unified School District
Project School:	Blue Oak Academy
CDS (County – District – School) Code:	54-10546-0135459
School Address/Proposed Site:	28050 Rd. 148, Visalia, CA 93292-9297
Type of Project:	Rehabilitation; New Construction
Type of Apportionment:	Preliminary
County:	Tulare
District in which Project is Located:	Visalia Unified School District
Charter Authorizer:	Tulare County Office of Education
Total OPSC Project Cost:*	\$20,085,452.20 \$12,387,709.40 (New Construction) \$7,697,742.80 (Rehabilitation)
State Apportionment (50% Project Cost):	\$10,042,726.10 \$6,193,854.70 (New Construction) \$3,848,871.40 (Rehabilitation)
Lump Sum Contribution:	N/A
Total CSFP Financed Amount:	\$10,042,726.10 \$6,193,854.70 (New Construction) \$3,848,871.40 (Rehabilitation)
Length of CSFP Funding Agreement:	30 years
Assumed Interest Rate:	3.00%
Estimated Annual CSFP Payment:	\$512,372 \$316,006 (New Construction) \$196,367 (Rehabilitation)
First Year of Occupancy of New Project:	2017-18

**The amount identified as total project costs represents an estimate provided by the Office of Public School Construction for purposes of Preliminary-Apportionment financial soundness review. Final project costs will be provided at the time of Final Apportionment.*

Staff recommends that the California School Finance Authority (“Authority” or “CSFA”) Board determine that Visalia Unified School District (“VUSD” or “District”) on behalf of Blue Oak Academy (“BOA” or “School”), is financially sound for the purposes of Charter School Facilities Program (“Program” or “CSFP”) Preliminary/Advance Apportionment. This recommendation, as it relates to Advance Apportionment. This determination as it relates

to Preliminary/Advance Apportionment is in place for twelve months and assumes no financial, operational, or legal material findings within this time period. This recommendation is contingent upon VUSD, on behalf of BOA, electing to have its CSFP payments intercepted at the state-level, pursuant to Sections 17199.4 and 17078.57(a)(1)(A) of the Education Code. Staff recommends that the Authority Board direct staff to notify the Office of Public School Construction (“OPSC”) and the State Allocation Board regarding this determination.

Application Highlights: Below staff has highlighted key criteria that were evaluated when conducting its financial soundness review of VUSD on behalf of BOA. Detailed information is contained in the body of the report.

<i>Criteria</i>	<i>Comments</i>
<i>Obligor Information</i>	
Demographic Information	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In 2016-17, VUSD operated/authorized 42 schools: 27 elementary schools, 5 middle schools, 7 high schools, 1 adult education center, 1 continuation high school and 1 special education school. Enrollment totaled 28,932 students (the ADA rate was 95%). • By 2018-19, VUSD projects an enrollment of 29,690 students.
Debt Service Coverage	The district is providing its matching share through the 30 year loan option the DSC coverage based on LCFF sources that are subject to the CSFA intercept is 53592.50%
Other Financial Factors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • VUSD’s general fund (chief operating fund) has a projected balance of \$88,395,076 as of the end of 2017-18. • VUSD’s expected annual CSFP payment of \$721,375 is only 0.2% of VUSD projected operating revenue on average.
<i>District/(Authorizer) Information</i>	
Demographic Information	In 2016-17, Tulare County Office of Education operated/authorized 9 schools: 2 elementary schools, 2 K-12 schools, 2 high schools, 1 juvenile court school, 1 special education school, and 1 county community center. Enrollment totaled 2,595 students.
<i>School Information</i>	
Eligibility Criteria	BOA has met all eligibility criteria: (1) BOA began operation in 2017; (2) BOA’s charter was approved in December 2016 and is in place through June 2022; (3) BOA is in good standing with its chartering authority, and in compliance with the terms of its charter.
Student Performance	BOA is in its first year of operation and therefore has no student data for comparison.
Demographic Information	BOA currently serves 126 students in grades K-2 with the intention of serving K-8 in 2023-2024. Enrollment in 2018-19 is expected to be 168 students. ADA rates are projected to be

	95.5%, which staff find reasonable.
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Program Eligibility: On October 6, 2017, at CSFA staff's request, verification was received from VUSD confirming that BOA (1) has not been in operation for more than 2 years but meets the supplementary requirement of having key personnel with experience operating and/or managing a California charter school for at least two years, (2) in compliance with the terms of its charter agreements, and (3) in good standing with its chartering authority. BOA's current charter is effective through June 2022.

Legal Status Questionnaire: Staff reviewed the applicant's responses to the questions contained in the Legal Status portion of the application. No information was disclosed that would lead staff to question the financial or legal integrity of this applicant.

Project Description: BOA is applying for both rehabilitation and new construction for 28050 Road 148 address. The rehabilitation project will modernize existing building built in 1952 and modernized in 1987, which have 17,034 square feet of which 798 square feet are restrooms. The existing facilities on this site have seven rooms which can be used as classroom. The new construction project will add ten K-6 classrooms and four grade 7-8 classrooms. The site will have a total capacity of 521 students.

Obligor Organizational Information: VUSD is a school district located in Tulare County and operates and/or authorizes 42 schools: 27 elementary schools, five middle schools, seven high schools, one adult education center, one continuation high school and one special education school.

VUSD is comprised of the following mix of races/ethnicities: 67.8% Hispanic or Latino; 21.3% Caucasian; 4.3% Asian; 1.5% African American/Black; 2.4% identifying with two or more races/ethnicities; 0.8% American Indian/Alaska Native; 0.6% Filipino; 0.1% Pacific Islander; and 1.1% not reporting.

The 2017-18 board members consist of President Lucia D. Vazquez, Clerk William A. Fulmer, John L. Crabtree, Patricia M. Griswold, Juan Guerrero, Jim L. Qualls, and Charles Ulmschneider. The superintendent is Todd Oto, Ed.D. Staff has reviewed the credentials of the key board members and staff and determined them to have the proper background and experience to govern and effectively oversee the operations of VUSD.

Authorizer Organizational Information: Tulare County Office of Education (TCOE) is located in Tulare County and operates and/or authorizes nine schools: two elementary schools, two K-12 schools, two high schools, one juvenile court school, one special education school, and one county community center. TCOE is comprised of the following mix of races/ethnicities: 46.7% Hispanic or Latino; 22.9% Caucasian; 8.7% African American/Black; 8.5% Asian; 5.0% Filipino; 6.9% identifying with two or more races/ethnicities; 0.4% Pacific Islander; 0.2% American Indian/Alaska Native; and 0.7% not reporting. The 2017-18 board members consist of President Chris Reed, Vice President Judy Coble, Joe Enea, Patricia Hillman, Debby Holguin, Tom Link, and Celia Maldonado-Arroyo. The superintendent is Jim Vidak.

School Organizational Information: BOA is a public charter school located within the boundaries of VUSD and is authorized by TCOE. BOA's initial charter was submitted to VUSD on August 11 2016 and was denied. BOA's charter was submitted to TCOE on appeal on December 7, 2016 with the charter set to expire on June 30, 2022. The school is a direct-funded independent charter school and operates as a California public benefit corporation with an IRS approved 501(c)(3) status. BOA's is operated by the Academies, a non-profit charter manager organization which oversees one other school, Blue Oak Academy. BOA operates autonomously from the District, with the exception of the supervisory oversight as required by statute and other contracted services as negotiated between the District and the School.

BOA shares the same mission statement as the Academies which is “to provide a rich, meaningful education in a nurturing environment where students are continually challenged and their natural curiosity, creativity, and talents can thrive. We are a collaborative community of educators and families working together to help our students grow into virtuous, courageous, and intelligent citizens, equipped with a love of learning and a love of life, and eager to contribute to a better world.”

BOA's instructional framework is based on a constructivist/progressive philosophy of education. BOA has nine “guiding principles for instruction”: 1) Multi-age grouping; 2) Differentiation; 3) Project-based learning; 4) Gifted education for all students; 5) Development of scholarly habits of mind; 6) Enriched curriculum; 7) Social and emotional learning; 8) Authentic assessment and mastery orientation; and 9) Collaboration in the whole school community. Since BOA uses “multi-age grouping”, students are grouped in K, 1st and 2nd, 3rd and 4th, and 5th and 6th for the elementary school program and 7-8 for the middle school program.

The school's curriculum follows the Common Core Standards. The following provides which content is used in each core subject: English Language Arts – Superkids Reading Program Tradebooks (K-2), Rigby PM Readers (K-2), Lucy Calkins Units of Study in Reading (K-5), Lucy Calkins Units of Study in Writing (K-8), Founras and Pinnell Guided Reading Leveled Library, and various novels and informational text (K-8); Mathematics – Eureka Math/Engage NY (K-6), Georgia State Department of Education CCSS Units, TERC Investigation in Numbers Data, Space (K-5), Big Ideas Math (7) Accelerated (Houghton Mifflin), Big Ideas Math (8) Algebra 1 (Houghton Mifflin), and Khan Academy; Science – AIMS Hands-on Science units and lessons (K-6), Oakland Unified designed NGSS Secondary Science Program (7-8), and Project-Based Inquiry Science (7-8); History/Social Science – ‘Reflections: A Changing State’ (Harcourt), ‘History Alive’ (5-8) (Teachers Curriculum Institute), and ‘Reading Like a Historian’ (Stanford History Education Group)

BOA is governed by the Academies governing board of directors which consists of no less than five and no more than nine members. Members can hold office for a term of two years or until a successor has been elected. The 2017-18 board members consist of Chair Rachele Berglund, Esq., Vice Chair Harold Rollin, Esq., Treasurer Toby Maitland-Lewis, Secretary Robert N. Line, Authorizer Representative Craig Wheaton, Erin Andersen, and Dennis Johnson. Ruth Dutton serves as the Academies superintendent and Dana Stinson serves as BOA's principal. Staff has reviewed the credentials of the key board member and

determined them to have the proper background and experience to govern and effectively oversee the operations of BOA.

School Academic Performance: BOA does not have any student data available as it began operations in 2017-18. Therefore the following tables represent the 2014-15, 2015-16 and 2016-17 academic performance of the combined averages of Annie R. Mitchell Elementary (grades P-6) and Divisadero Middle (grades 7-8) (Local Schools), VUSD, and Tulare County (Tulare). The two local schools were selected to cover the same grade span as BOA. The results are provided through CDE's CAASPP Smarter Balanced testing data.

English Language Arts – Comparison

	Years		
	2016-17	2015-16	2014-15
Local Schools	43%	42%	39%
VUSD	47%	48%	42%
Tulare	38%	38%	32%

	All Students Performance			Student Groups w/ Below Avg. Performance		
	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17
Local Schools	N/A	Low; High	N/A*	N/A	4/4; 1/5	N/A*
VUSD	N/A	Average	N/A*	N/A	1/10	N/A*
Tulare	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A

* Unavailable at time of report

Mathematics– Comparison

	Years		
	2016-17	2015-16	2014-15
Local School	27%	28%	35%
VUSD	31%	32%	29%
Tulare	38%	25%	21%

	All Students Performance			Student Groups w/ Below Avg. Performance		
	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17
School						
Local Schools	N/A	Lowest; Average	N/A*	N/A	4/4; 0/5	N/A*
VUSD	N/A	Average	N/A*	N/A	1/10	N/A*
Tulare	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A

* Unavailable at time of report

Enrollment Trends and Projections: The tables below present enrollment information for VUSD and BOA from 2013-14 through 2020-21. The assumptions made in the projected years are considered reasonable by staff and consistent based on historical data.

District-wide Student Enrollment and Average Daily Attendance

<u>VUSD</u>	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21
Enrollment	27,835	28,267	28,546	28,932	29,384	29,690	29,587	30,129
ADA	94.8%	94.1%	94.3%	95.0%	95.0%	95.0%	95.0%	95.0%

School Student Enrollment and Average Daily Attendance

<u>BOA</u>	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21
Enrollment	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	126	168	210	252
ADA	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	95.5%	95.5%	95.5%	95.5%

District Financial Analysis:

Financial Data Sources: This financial analysis is based on the consideration and review of the following for VUSD, the financial obligor and Applicant, on behalf of BOA: (1) audited financial statements for 2013-14, 2014-15 and 2015-16; (2) unaudited actuals for 2016-17; (3) adopted budget for 2017-18; and (4) budget projections for 2018-19 through 2020-21 along with assumptions. Please note that staff's analysis of VUSD's financial performance, including the evaluation operating budget and liquidity, is based on the General Fund only.

Assumptions: VUSD's financial projections are based upon the following assumptions: (1) occupancy of the rehabilitation and new construction projects in 2017-18; (2) District-wide enrollment projections as provided above under "Enrollment Trends and Projections"; (3) Projected District-wide ADA rates of 95%, which are consistent with historical performance; (4) Local Control Funding Formula (LCFF) per-ADA funding rate of \$10,870 for 2017-18, as included with VUSD's adopted budget document for 2017-18, along with projected changes in LCFF funding level adjustments of 2.75% (2017-18), 2.22% (2018-19), and 2.42% (2019-20).

Long Term Liabilities: As provided by the 2015-16 audited financial statements, the District has \$293.7 million in long term debt. The long term liabilities are from the following governmental activities: \$65,925,502 million payable in general obligation bonds; \$17,615,000 million payable towards certificates of participation; \$860,000 payable in capitalized lease obligations, \$210,000 payable towards a state school building loan, \$195,322,000 million in net pension liability, \$12,765,089 million in net obligated in other post-employment benefits, and \$1,058,861 million payable in compensated absences. Only \$2,302,246 is due within one year with \$1,486,810 (65%) of that amount payable towards general obligation bond debt. The remaining due is towards certificate of participation (\$400,000) and capitalized lease obligations (\$415,436).

General obligation bond debt is paid from the Bond Interest and Redemption Fund. This fund has a balance of approximately \$6.5 million by the end of 2016-17. Payments on the

certificates of participation are made from the Debt Service Fund through transfers from the General Fund as well as the Special Reserve Capital Outlay Fund in 2015-16. The applicant has indicated that an intra-fund transfer from General Fund will provide the Debt Service Fund balance. The 2016-17 unaudited actuals indicates transfers from the General Fund of \$1,082,862.52 and \$1,120,113.00 for 2016-17 and 2017-18 respectively. Payments on the capitalized lease obligations and the state school building loan are made from the General Fund as well. This fund has a balance of approximately \$84MM by the end of 2016-17 and an estimated \$96MM by the end of 2017-18.

Private Contributions: VUSD does not rely on any private contributions.

Benchmark Summary and Analysis: The following table and summary listing sets forth the results of staff's analysis regarding VUSD's financial soundness. Where a threshold has been established based on industry standards or practice, the listing indicates whether or not the threshold was met.

OPERATIONAL, FINANCIAL & STUDENT PERFORMANCE METRICS								
	Actual FY 2014	Actual FY 2015	Actual FY 2016	Projected FY 2017	Projected FY 2018	Projected FY 2019	Projected FY 2020	Projected FY 2021
OPERATIONAL & FINANCIAL								
Enrollment	27,835	28,267	28,546	28,932	29,384	29,690	29,587	30,129
Average Daily Attendance (ADA)	26,375	26,606	26,923	27,485	27,915	28,206	28,108	28,623
Average Daily Attendance (%)	94.8%	94.1%	94.3%	95.0%	95.0%	95.0%	95.0%	95.0%
LCFF Sources/ADA	\$ 6,718	\$ 7,607	\$ 8,688	\$ 9,130	\$ 9,240	\$ 9,364	\$ 9,645	\$ 9,715
% Change		13.2%	14.2%	5.1%	1.2%	1.3%	3.0%	0.7%
Operating Revenues/ADA	\$ 8,388	\$ 9,485	\$ 11,303	\$ 11,255	\$ 10,870	\$ 10,976	\$ 11,263	\$ 11,304
% Change		13.1%	19.2%	-0.4%	-3.4%	1.0%	2.6%	0.4%
Operating Expenses plus CSFP Lease/ADA	\$ 8,008	\$ 9,030	\$ 10,083	\$ 10,558	\$ 10,697	\$ 11,137	\$ 11,517	\$ 11,573
% Change		12.8%	11.7%	4.7%	1.3%	4.1%	3.4%	0.5%
Free Cash Flow/ADA	\$ 380	\$ 455	\$ 1,220	\$ 697	\$ 172	\$ (161)	\$ (254)	\$ (269)
DEBT SERVICE COVERAGE								
Total Operating Revenues	\$ 221,222,161	\$ 252,347,450	\$ 304,314,062	\$ 309,347,049	\$ 303,423,171	\$ 309,570,830	\$ 316,569,258	\$ 323,536,767
Total Operating Expenses	211,197,824	240,248,011	271,471,717	290,179,545	298,609,287	314,118,541	323,194,207	330,731,270
Total Other Sources/Uses	(14,371,060)	(10,410,991)	(22,590,248)	(6,089,854)	(3,118,442)	(3,118,442)	(3,118,442)	(3,118,442)
Net Income Available for CSFP Lease Payment	(4,346,723)	1,688,448	10,252,097	13,077,651	1,695,442	(7,666,153)	(9,743,391)	(10,312,945)
Add Back Capital Outlay	5,516,607	2,299,305	11,309,447	11,636,179	7,912,990	7,912,990	7,912,990	7,912,990
Add Back Depreciation	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Adjusted Net Income Available for CSFP Lease Pymt.	1,169,884	3,987,753	21,561,544	24,713,830	9,608,432	246,837	(1,830,401)	(2,399,955)
CSFP Lease Payments	-	-	-	-	-	-	512,372	512,372
Free Cash Flow	\$ 1,169,884	\$ 3,987,753	\$ 21,561,544	\$ 24,713,830	\$ 9,608,432	\$ 246,837	\$ (2,342,773)	\$ (2,912,327)
DSC from LCFF Sources subject to CSFA Intercept	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	52912.6%	54272.4%
LIQUIDITY								
Current Assets	\$ 97,893,473	\$ 95,004,759	\$ 121,839,677					
Current Liabilities	28,545,882	23,968,720	40,551,541					
Net Working Capital	\$ 69,347,591	\$ 71,036,039	\$ 81,288,136					
Net Working Capital/Oper. Expenses	32.8%	29.6%	29.9%					
Unrestricted Cash & Cash Equivalents	\$ 58,003,664	\$ 74,516,155	\$ 103,125,812					
Unrest. Cash & CE/Oper. Expenses (Days)	100	113	139					
Unrest. Cash & CE/All Expenses (Days)	100	113	139					

Benchmark Summary:

- Free Cash Flow/ADA – Met: \$358 avg. (>\$0)
- Free Cash Flow – Met: \$6,168,979 avg. (>\$0)
- Debt Service Coverage from LCFF Sources – Met: 53592.50%
- Net Working Capital as Portion of Operating Expenses – Met: 30.8% (>5%)

- Unrestricted Cash & Cash Equivalents as Portion of All Expenses – Met: 117 days (> 90 days)

Summary of Financial Findings and Special Considerations: Though staff typically considers traditional debt service coverage, i.e. as a percentage of net available income, school district finances are much more complex than the typical charter school or CMO finances in which CSFP's debt service coverage ratio was developed. In order to accurately determine the financial soundness of school district choosing the loan repayment option, staff considered additional measures such as fund balance, CDE's interim reports on financial health, GO bond ratings provided by accredited organizations, debt service coverage from LCFF sources, and the size of the CSFP payments as a percentage of the district's revenue.

VUSD fund balance as of June 30, 2017 is \$94,365,787 with \$44,440,409.79 in unrestricted funds. VUSD's has been certified by the CDE as able to meet its financial obligations for years 2013-14 through 2016-17 and is expected to meet its financial obligations for 2017-18 and 2018-19. Standard and Poor's rating services assigned an 'A+' rating to VUSD's 2015 GO bonds and an 'A' rating to the 2015 certificates of participations. Standard and Poor's assessment was based on "strong financial performance", "very strong reserves" and "low net overall debt burden (1.6 % of total market value)". Moody's assigned VUSD an "Aa3" and described its credit position as "high quality". Moody assessed VUSD has a net direct debt to full value of 0.7%; an available fund balance as a percent of operating revenues that is on par with the national median; and a net cash balance as a percent of revenue which exceeds the national media while growing materially between 2013 and 2016. In relation to repayment, VUSD has an average debt service coverage ratio of 155065.5% for 2019-20 and 2020-21 from LCFF sources subject to the program intercept. The annual CSFP payment of \$177,082 is 0.06% and 0.05% for 2019-20 and 2020-21 respectively.

Staff did review the General Fund operation to provide insight into the operational viability of the school district when taking on the loan obligations but did not use the net income of the General Fund to measure debt service coverage as done with charter schools and/or CMOs. VUSD's General Fund has operated with a deficit one of the four years of actual financial statements but does projects three of the four projected years end with negative net income. It should be noted that the single year of an actual operating deficits, 2013-14, ended with -\$4,346,723 in net income but the General Fund had transferred \$9,303,056 to other VUSD funds for various payables. Considering the projected operating deficits for 2018-19 through 2020-21, the deficits makes up the following percentages of the General Fund's total balance respectively: 8.6%, 12.3%, and 15%.

Though BOA has no financial obligation with the CSFP project, staff reviewed BOA's financials to ensure the school was financial viable to continue operations. As 2017-18 is BOA's first year of operation, staff reviewed the projected budgets from 2017-18 through 2020-21. The average net operating income is \$138,816 a year. It should be noted that BOA averages a fund balance of \$480,286 from 2017-18 through 2020-21 and averages 30% growth each year over the five years reviewed. The projected general fund balance for 2020-21 is expected to be \$694,078. Major funding sources for BOA for its projected 2017-18 budget include LCFF income sources which account for approximately 64% of BOA's

revenue; federal revenue sources (Title I & II, Implementation Grant, and Federal Special Education Entitlement) which account for approximately 32%; state revenue sources (Mandate Cost Reimbursements, and Special Education Revenue Entitlement), which account for approximately 3% of revenue; and other local revenue sources (After School Program Revenue) account for approximately 1% of BOA's current revenue.

Strengths, Weaknesses and Mitigants:

- + BOA is financially viable based on a review of projected budgets for 2017-18 through 2020-21 which staff considers reasonable.
- + VUSD has received an "A+" from Standard and Poor's and "Aa3" rating for their 2015 GO bonds.
- + VUSD's General Fund balance, as of June 30, 2017, was \$94,365,787 with \$44,440,409.79 in unrestricted funds.
- + VUSD's DSC from LCFF sources, which are subject to the program's intercept, is 53912.6% for 2019-20 and 54272.4% for 2020-21.
- +/- VUSD projects its General Fund performing at a deficit from 2018-19 through 2020-21, but has an adequate fund balance at the end of each of these years, in addition to the additional criteria reviewed listed in "Summary of Financial Findings and Special Considerations".

Staff Recommendation: Staff recommends that the California School Finance Authority ("Authority" or "CSFA") Board determine that Visalia Unified School District ("VUSD" or "District") on behalf of Blue Oak Academy ("BOA" or "School"), is financially sound for the purposes of Charter School Facilities Program ("Program" or "CSFP") Preliminary/Advance Apportionment. This recommendation, as it relates to Advance Apportionment. This determination as it relates to Preliminary/Advance Apportionment is in place for twelve months and assumes no financial, operational, or legal material findings within this time period. This recommendation is contingent upon VUSD, on behalf of BOA, electing to have its CSFP payments intercepted at the state-level, pursuant to Sections 17199.4 and 17078.57(a)(1)(A) of the Education Code. Staff recommends that the Authority Board direct staff to notify the Office of Public School Construction ("OPSC") and the State Allocation Board regarding this determination.